1798
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AN

UNION

NEITHER

NECESSARY OR EXPEDIENT

FOR

IRELAND:

BEING AN

ANSWER

TO THE

AUTHOR

OF

ARGUMENTS FOR AND AGAINST AN *UNION*,
BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND
IRELAND, CONSIDERED.

BY CHARLES BALL, ESQ.

MOTOS PRÆSTAT COMPONERE FLUCTUS.

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TO THE

AUTHOR

OF A

PAMPHLET, &c. &c. &c.

SIR,

WHEN *an enterprifing adventurer in the trade of politics*, under the fhield of darknefs and fecrecy, has bafely infulted the people and parliament of Ireland, and has attempted to commit an act of deliberate treafon, *by difuniting for ever the realm of Ireland from the Britifh crown*—a few hours employed in endeavouring to detect his fallacies, expofe his arrogance, and refute his conclufions, will not be confidered as thrown away by thofe to whom the intereſts of the Britifh empire, the fecurity of Ireland, and the tranquillity of her people, are objects of affection. Under that fentiment, I proceed to addreſs to the nation fome obfervations which have occurred to me from the perufal of your pamphlet.

In the firſt page of this extraordinary production, you ſtate the queſtion as " applying to all the *feelings*, *prejudices*, and *paſſions* of the human mind," and expreſs your " *only fear*" to be, " that the ſubject will not be properly debated."—How far you have been able to handle the ſubject *free from prejudice*, and *in a way likely to appeaſe the feelings* and *paſſions* of thoſe to whom your diſcourſe is addreſſed, and *to debate the ſubject properly*, it is my preſent intention to enquire.

Before that firſt page is concluded, you give a gentle hint to the People of Ireland, " that the ſubject *may come* to be decided by force," and conciſely add a warning of the " *miſchief*" which we may incur, in caſe it ſhall be found neceſſary to reſort to *that mode of debating the queſtion*; promiſing at the ſame time, that " to determine it on its own merits cannot fail to be uſeful."—What are then the *merits* of the queſtion as ſtated by you?

You propoſe (*a*) " to view the queſtion in the abſtract," and you begin by aſſuming, " that two independent ſtates, finding their ſeparate exiſtence mutually inconvenient, propoſe to form themſelves into one ſtate, for their mutual benefit."—Is there in this aſſertion any thing to be found in the moſt remote degree applicable to Ireland? When did Ireland *feel her ſeparate exiſtence inconvenient?* And when did ſhe *propoſe to form, &c. &c.?* There

(*a*) Page 2.

never

never has been any given topic of a political nature ſo abhorrent from the feelings and opinions of the people and parliament of Ireland, as a Union with England. It has often been mentioned as a project deſirable to England, or rather to the miniſter of England; but there never was found in the Iriſh parliament, or the whole Iriſh nation, a man who could be brought to ſay, that he believed a Union would be beneficial to Ireland. Nay, when Ireland had a great and valuable object to gain from England—*no leſs than a free conſtitution*, and *an unſhackled commerce*—no Iriſhman ever conceived that *thoſe benefits*, great as they were, *ought to be purchaſed at ſo high, ſo extravagant a price.* And even now, when it has become, I truſt without foundation, the boaſt of the Engliſh miniſter, or his partizans, that he has ſecured the concurrence of our two houſes of parliament, it appears he has only been able to debauch them in their parliamentary capacity, for he cannot find a ſingle Iriſhman, that will give him more than his vote. When he wants an advocate to come forward in print, he is obliged to have recourſe to an Engliſhman.

As an encouragement to Ireland to unite with England, and to ſubject herſelf to the controul of the Britiſh nation, you call our attention to the "(*b*) *cruel oppreſſion* exerciſed by the Spaniſh government over the provinces of Holland," and indeed you might have carried the example to every in-

(*b*) Page 3.

ſtance where a *weaker nation* was *ſubject to the power* of *a ſtronger*; you might have ſwelled your pamphlet with inſtances of the tyranny of Rome over her provinces—of that very Spain over Portugal—of Genoa over Corſica—of England over her colonies, and even over Ireland, while ſhe had the power to inflict it. But, for the happineſs of the world, the Roman Empire has forages been diſſolved—the provinces of Lower Germany ſoon threw off the yoke of Spain—Portugal has become independent of its proud and domineering neighbour—America is free —and Ireland is no longer a ſlave.—Corſica, it is true, enjoys but the melancholy ſatisfaction of beholding her contemptible deſpot bound with her in one common chain.

Do you ſeriouſly expect that the bold and deſperate atchievement which led to the ſubverſion of the Sabines, and (*c*) " laid the foundation of Roman greatneſs," or the ſucceſsful ambition of " that prince, who added to his hereditary Canton the territories of thoſe Toparhs, whom his *policy could circumvent*, or *his arms ſubdue*," can furniſh arguments to Ireland to forego her pride, her independence, and her national intereſts ?—Is the *courage of Rome*, and the *enterprize of Edgar*, to teach *meanneſs* and *ſervile apathy* to Ireland ? or do you wiſh to remind us of the miſerable, plundered, and abject ſituation of the Sabines, " *when they found they could no longer maintain themſelves againſt the Ro-*

(*c*) *Ibidem.*

mans,"

mans?" and do you dare thus to imply, that *we have no alternative but voluntary ſubmiſſion, or rapacious conqueſt?*—I truſt you are doubly miſtaken, and that if the latter be attempted, we *ſhall be able for ever to maintain ourſelves*—But ſurely ſo baſe an attempt is not in contemplation.

How profound is your concluſion, that the extinction of the Sabines, (a name extant in hiſtory, only as neceſſary to record the triumph of Rome) and the reduction of all England by the king of the Eaſt Angles can *(d)* " form a complete anſwer to all topics of national dignity and national pride" !! —Be not ſolicitous, oh, Ireland, for *your national dignity* or *your national pride*—ſubmit them to the will of the Engliſh Miniſter—take the advice of the agent for England; the *Princes* of the Heptarchy were reduced to the rank of *galley ſlaves*, and *exchanged the ſceptre for the oar*; the *Sabines* (whoſe numbers perhaps would have peopled a ſingle ſtreet of your metropolis) three thouſand years ago, *ſubmitted to the Romans*, from whom they had received the deepeſt injury that man can offer man, *after they could no longer maintain themſelves* againſt thoſe violators of every law, divine and human.—Of thoſe prudent homagers nothing remains but the memory of their diſgrace and their defeat, while the little infant rapine of the conquerors is overlooked in the ſtupendous contemplation of their more mature and wide-ſpread domination.

(*d*) *Ibidem.*

You

You hint *(e)* " that you might extend your reaſoning, as you call it, to Wales and Scotland." Perhaps you wiſh to remind us of the *fortunate pretext* that introduced an Engliſh army into Wales, and the *honourable uſe* that was made of it—But I deſpiſe the impotent and inſidious threat, and I rely upon the humanity and integrity of our virtuous Sovereign.—Of the Union with Scotland, I ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

After comparing your project to a *(f)* " partnerſhip in trade," and affecting to ſuppoſe that in that partnerſhip Ireland may have a chance of a fair " proportion, &c. &c." you proceed to apply your abſtract argument to the caſe before you. And here I am led to aſk this queſtion *in limine*—Is Ireland not only to be ſubject to the nod and fiat of England, as a nation, but has every individual Engliſhman, let his general pretenſions be never ſo humble, a right merely as an Engliſhman, to inſult, vilify, and calumniate our People? You have my free conſent to extol *(g)* " your civilization, your agriculture, your commerce, your manufactures, your morals, your manners, your eſtabliſhments, and your conſtitution," as much as the low ſyſtem of prejudice and national preſumption, which you have adopted, may require; but in *courting* Ireland to a cloſer connection with England, (if, indeed, you mean to *court*, and not to *dragoon*) do you hope to conciliate us, by telling us that we are a *ſavage*,

(*e*) Page 4. (*f*) Page 5. (*g*) Page 6.

immoral,

immoral, irrational, ill-mannered race, with almoſt every other degrading and contemptuous inſinuation—I well know, ſuch are the ſentiments which the *low and vulgar* of your country entertain of the people of Ireland, but in a long intercourſe with that country, I declare I never had the misfortune of meeting a *ſingle gentleman* ſo *weak* and *illiberal* as to avow thoſe prejudices ; but I will ſpeak to the fact—I will admit that the cruel and rapacious tyranny of the Engliſh parliament, while it exerciſed over Ireland a deſpotiſm as fatal as that to which you would again enthrall us, did, by ſelfiſh and unjuſt reſtraints, impede our commerce, and cripple the manufactures of this country ; and did *beguile us with a Counterfeit* reſembling the Britiſh Conſtitution; —by which the progreſs of civilization, agriculture, eſtabliſhments, were interrupted amongſt us, and our morals and manners in a conſiderable degree affected, as our national proſperity was depreſſed and humbled ; but, thank Heaven, the picture is now reverſed, and you yourſelf, in the progreſs of your work, confeſs enough to prove that this boaſted ſuperiority of England in thoſe particulars, is in a great meaſure but the phantom of national arrogance.—With the *(h)* " beſt agriculture" in the world, you ſtate, *(i)* " that England does not produce corn ſufficient for her own conſumption," and with *(k)* " an agriculture by no means perfect" you admit " that Ireland can afford a ſupply of that article to Great Britain," and think that

(*h*) Page 7. (*i*) Page 38. (*k*) Page 7.

trade

trade of ſuch magnitude and benefit to Ireland, that "to ſecure the preference in the Britiſh market" is one of the *douceurs* you offer as the price of a Union. Exalted as England is, and humble as you repreſent Ireland in commerce, you confeſs (*l*) "Cork to be already the emporium of proviſion for the Britiſh navy," you extol almoſt beyond the limits of belief the (*m*) "export of linens from the North of Ireland"—again you admit in a general way, (*n*) "that the commerce of Ireland has encreaſed;" nay, you go the length of ſaying, (*o*) "that in the laſt twenty years no country in the world ever made ſuch rapid advances as Ireland has done, in population, in agriculture, in manufactures, in wealth, and proſperity."—True, indeed, you couple to theſe admiſſions, ſo contradictory of your general argument, a boaſtful diſplay of the bounty of England, in having ſuffered us to acquire and enjoy ſuch advantages, and you kindly ſuggeſt the riſk we run of being robbed of them (*p*) "by the power of England, by the bravery and good order of the Britiſh army, and by her naval greatneſs." In ſhort, the *degrading ſentiments* you profeſs to feel towards Ireland, and the *complete ſubjection* to which England may reduce her in caſe of non-compliance, ſeems throughout to be the whole foundation of your argument.—Is not the following the true ſubſtance of your addreſs?—Mean, beggarly, vicious, and contemptible nation, come forward to this treaty with your elevated, wealthy, auguſt, and

(*l*) Page 41. (*m*) Page 42. (*n*) Page 51. (*o*) Page 52. (*p*) *Paſſim.*

powerful

powerful neighbour. Rely upon it, you ſhall enjoy equal advantage in the arrangement of the terms, for *ſhe knows your worthleſſneſs* and *her own merit*; and feels for you preciſely as I, an Engliſhman, have profeſſed to do; and this ſentiment coupled with the *great power of England*, her *brave and orderly ſoldiery*, and *her naval greatneſs*, which are now able to rob you of all your preſent advantages, will inſure you not only *fair* and *equal terms* in the treaty, but a *liberal* and *honorable conſtruction* of it at all future times. In fact, you are ſo much in the power of Great Britain already, that you ought more effectually to ſeal your dependence and degradation; and you may ſafely rely on the proportion of ſtrength which I propoſe to you (*q*), ("the proportion of one to five") as a complete protection in all caſes where new or unforeſeen diſcordances of intereſt may ariſe, or where diſputed applications of the principles of confederation may occur.

(*r*) The example of that rapacity with which France has aggrandized her power, is made another argument in favour of an Union. If France by her tyrannical uſurpation of the territory of "Geneva, of Savoy, of Flanders, of the German ſtates, &c. &c." while ſhe has debaſed, enſlaved, and cruelly oppreſſed thoſe nations, *has added to her own happineſs* and *her own power*; go in the name of rapine, and preach up to *other powerful countries* that may be ready to ſacrifice their moral to their political feel-

(*q*) Page 46. (*r*) Page 8.

ings, go preach to them the example of France. If England is willing, either by fraud or violence, to poſſeſs, in effect, the fruits of that ſuperiority over Ireland, the theory of which you contemplate with ſo much complacency and pride, let the example of France become her inducement; and, if it can, let it form her juſtification; but while Spain and Holland and Lombardy are degraded, while Switzerland bleeds, and while the nations of the Rhine lie bound beneath the ſword of France, do not hope to excite in us a deſire *to rank in the ſame line and predicament* with thoſe, *miſerable nations.*

Whether it be with a view farther to reconcile Ireland to her preſent *ſecondary* ſituation, or to induce her to change that ſecondary ſtate to one of *actual and complete ſubjection*, your argument to prove the *inevitable inconvenience* of *even the preſent connection*, appears to my humble capacity the moſt abſurd that ever iſſued from the pen of a maniac; and, at the preſent moment, the moſt dangerous and inflammatory (*s*). "The kingdom where the monarch does not reſide, you ſay, not having the origination of all councils and meaſures, and having much of its rents carried away by abſentees, would be in a perpetual ſtate of jealouſy and diſcontent." Thus you ſay to Ireland,—inaſmuch as you are diſſatisfied at the abſence of *one* branch of your legiſlature, the only remedy I can ſuggeſt, is to ſend away the other *two*. As you regret that you have not the

(*s*) Page 10.

origi-

originating of *all* meaſures and councils, you will of courſe be fully reconciled to that inconvenience, by enjoying the origination of *none*. And whereas you are already impoveriſhed by the rents of the kingdom being carried away by abſentees, the method to correct the evil, and to *diminiſh* the amount of the rents ſo carried away, is to *increaſe* the numbers of thoſe very abſentees.—Are the Iriſh a nation of idiots!!

You ſuppoſe the people to whom you addreſs yourſelf, no doubt, to be as ignorant of ordinary hiſtorical facts, as deficient in every moral and intellectual faculty; for you aſſert (*t*), "that the Scotch having become entitled to the privileges of Britiſh ſubjects, *have enjoyed internal tranquillity*, &c." Is this intended as a barefaced miſrepreſentation, or are we ſeriouſly to underſtand that *two rebellions* ſet on foot by the firſt men in Scotland, who had for their object the *overthrow of the Britiſh conſtitution*, the *diſunion of the legiſlatures*, the *dethronement of the King*, and *the ſubſtitution of a Pretender*, (and which actually went well nigh to accompliſh their objects) are not of equal importance, as national events, with the late *convulſion of two months continuance* in this country, in which, with very few exceptions indeed, *none* but *the loweſt and moſt ignorant of the mob* were engaged, and which was *completely ſuppreſſed by the loyal yeomanry of Ireland*, before the arrival of the Engliſh reinforcements?

(*t*) Page 11.

You affirm, " that Ireland ſtands in the ſame ſituation that Scotland did previous to the Union," qualifying however the aſſertion with *one exception*; but unluckily this one exception appears, from your own ſhewing, to comprehend *the whole of the caſe*. You ſtate, " that the alternative of a Union or a ſeparation between Scotland and England became inevitable, *becauſe the Scots parliament was taking meaſures to ſeparate the two crowns*." " Ireland, you ſay, is in the *ſame ſituation* as Scotland was in, except that *the only* fact which rendered a Union with Scotland neceſſary, namely, *the danger of the two crowns being ſeparated*, does *not* exiſt as to Ireland," becauſe, as you fully and truly ſtate it, " the crown of Ireland is by the expreſs ſtatutes *perpetually annexed to* and dependant upon the crown of England, ſo that whoever is King of England is in right of that title, and ipſo facto, King of Ireland."—What a cloſe and critical analogy!!!

How ſolicitous do you appear for the tranquillity of Ireland, but how effectually (on your own principles) do you ſow the ſeeds of eternal diſcord! (*u*)" With a parliament in its inſtitution independent," you repreſent (on what you have (*w*) before ſtated to be, *inevitable* grounds of diſcontent) many great jealouſies to exiſt in the minds of the Iriſh nation; and that the imputed ſubſervience of the legiſlature of Ireland to the councils of Great Britain, will have in future (as you ſay it has already had)

(*u*) Page 12. (*w*) Page 10.

a pre-

a prejudicial influence on the public mind, leading the people to diſtruſt and to diſparage their legiſlature." So that becauſe a legiſlature, *in its inſtitution independent*, cannot avoid ſometimes occaſioning (no matter whether from real or imputed ſubſervience to Britain) diſſatisfaction to the people, you ſuppoſe that very people, ſo jealous of Britiſh influence over an independent parliament, will be perfectly ſatisfied, when the *will of Great Britain* ſhall become avowedly and inevitably (as according to your proportion of five Britiſh to one Iriſh member, it neceſſarily muſt be) the *law of Ireland*. I ſpeak not here of the danger there may be that ſome of the *five* Britiſh members, not ſatisfied with out-voting the *one* Iriſh member, may follow your liberal example, and accompany his vote with calumny and inſult, becauſe that is only matter of private and individual concern.

But truly you have diſcovered a notable expedient for rendering the cabals of (*x*) "Britiſh oppoſition inoperative in Ireland,"—by making that very oppoſition a part of the legiſlative of Ireland! as if this nation is to become wholly inſenſible to the parties and factions of Great Britain, the moment ſhe becomes a part of that kingdom; and to loſe her ſenſibilities towards Britiſh concerns, merely by becoming more cloſely and inſeparably connected with Britain! and you hope to remove from the oppoſition in the Britiſh parliament all pretext for interfering in

(*x*) Page 15.

the

the affairs and party cabals of Ireland, by fubjecting Ireland to that very parliament!!! Admirable reaſoner!!

You attempt to argue from *(y)* "the overthrow of Poland," from "the ſubjugation of the ſeven United Provinces," and "the preſent ſecurity of America;"—But the weakneſs of Poland, which left it a prey to the rapacity of its neighbours, proceeds from cauſes not known in Ireland. *You* ſtate it to originate in *this*, "that in Poland *every ſenator was a ſovereign.*" Why do you ſo uniformly build on inapplicable examples? Let us ſee whether the United Netherlands and America furniſh more direct analogies.—In neither of thoſe countries, was *one* ſmall and inferior nation called upon to ſubmit her concerns to the management of *another*—ſuperior and powerful;—and to truſt to a *ſmaller number of repreſentatives* for a fair, juſt, and impartial diſpenſation of ſovereign and legiſlative protection: Each was an aſſociation of *equal* and *independent* ſovereignties, agreeing to act in all *joint* concerns by their *joint* will, but retaining all matters of *internal and ſeparate* intereſt, every one under its own *individual controul.* It was from no apparent nor even alledged *imperfections in the form and principles of their connection*, that Holland and her co-eſtates ſuffered by the ſucceſsful invaſion of France, with which a diſpoſition to revolt and to try new fortunes, ſtrongly co-operated;—and certainly the Union of the American States is as

(y) Page 16.

widely

widely different from the Union propoſed to Ireland, as any two political arrangements that were ever found to ſubſiſt in the world. The principal difference as applicable to the preſent queſtion is, that in the *Congreſs of America*, *each ſtate has its ſingle vote*, let its number of repreſentatives be what it may, and *no one ſtate* (as would be the caſe in the inſtance under diſcuſſion) can *by a plurality of voices bear down the intereſts of one another, or of all the reſt.* In all caſes where they are bound by a majority, it is by a majority of ſtates, and ſuch caſes only relate to concerns purely of an *imperial or external nature*, the *Union* in no inſtance interfering in the *internal and ſeparate œconomy of any individual ſtate.*

That for *imperial and external* purpoſes, there ought to be a ſtrict and *inſeparable Union* between theſe two iſlands, every friend to both will readily admit, but *that Union already exiſts* in the *unity* and *identity of the crown;* the only imperial and external organ known to our conſtitution.

At length you affect (z) "to examine the arguments which reſult from the particular ſituation of Ireland," and firſt, "as to the ſtate of its property."—On this topic I confeſs you are tolerably ſucceſsful;—you adviſe the Proteſtant proprietors deſcended from Britiſh families, to look for further ſecurity for their poſſeſſions in a Union; and, in order to make *further ſecurity neceſſary*, you take

(z) Page 19.

care

care to remind the native Catholics *how they were formerly diſpoſſeſſed*, and to diſcloſe all the real and imaginary defects of title in the preſent poſſeſſors. You then undertake to conſider the ſituation of Ireland (*a*) " as to religion ;" and here indeed, I am utterly at a loſs in attempting to keep pace with or follow you through the maze of deſultory and chaotic matter, which you have heaped together on this ſubject—Whether you mean to repreſent that a Union would ſecure to the Eſtabliſhed Religion that monopoly and predominance which it now enjoys, or to ſuggeſt that the Catholic church might reaſonably build thereon a proſpect of emerging from its preſent ſtate of depreſſion ; whether you intend to threaten the Proteſtant faith with overthrow in caſe of rejection, or to hold out hopes of eſtabliſhment to the Catholics as the reward of compliance ; or in ſhort, whether knowing the religious diviſions of Ireland, to be a ſubject not be over-looked, but which yet could afford no argument in ſupport of your concluſion, you thought the ſafeſt mode was to ſay as *much* as you could upon the topic, taking care that *that much* ſhould be but *little underſtood*—I confeſs I am at a loſs to determine.—In one point however, you are ſufficiently and *dreadfully explicit* —you plainly tell the Catholics (*b*) " that the Proteſtants ſtate that while *they* (the Catholics) *were reſtrained*, *the kingdom continued in tranquillity for a century*, but that as ſoon as national confidence induced a repeal of thoſe reſtrictions, the Catholics

(*a*) Page 20. (*b*) Page 21.

demanded

demanded ſuch a change in the Conſtitution, as would transfer to them all the power of the State.

Now, Sir, as the *benefit* you promiſe Ireland from a Union is *tranquillity*, and as your general argument in its favour is, that in the preſent ſtate of the country, *the diſcontents and jealouſies* between oppoſite ſects *are inveterate and incurable*, it is not extraordinary to find an Engliſhman who avows ſo much contempt and abhorrence for Ireland, and ſuch enthuſiaſtic love and admiration for England, *endeavouring to encreaſe and foment thoſe jealouſies*, which *he* conceives will lead to the *benefit of his favourite country, at the expence of the other.*—But I will endeavour to extinguiſh this firebrand which you have thrown upon the public mind; I will aſſert, *that the Proteſtants of Ireland never made ſo falſe and ſo ungenerous a charge againſt the Catholics.*—That projects to change the Conſtitution were formed, I do admit, but it is notorious, and none but a *determined incendiary* can deny it, that the Catholics, *as a body*, had no concern in originating theſe plans—Individuals of that as well as other religions were, no doubt, included in the number of the conſpirators; but the conſpiracy was founded on the example of France, where all religions were alike objects of contempt and deriſion; and, in fact, the Catholic members of the revolutionary party *(c) would as ſoon conſent to the Eſtabliſhment of the Mahometan as of the Popiſh Religion.*

(c) See Dr. M'Nevin's Evidence.

The French principle of overthrowing all diſtinctions to gratify plebeian envy, and excite the rapacity of the mob, by the ſpoil and degradation of the gentry; of levelling the throne, and annihilating all judicial and executive power, that property and order might be no longer protected, nor outrage reſtrained, was the grand cementing principle of the conſpiracy in Ireland. Some leaders, no doubt, looked to their own individual aggrandiſement, and prepoſterouſly hoped that a new and uſurped authority would be able to retain in ſubjection that mob, whom they had ſo ſedulouſly inſtructed to believe that authority, law, reſtraint, and ſubordination, were the worſt of injuries; and that rank, office, wealth, and power, were crimes only to be expiated by aſſaſſination. It is equally true, that, under the banners of this conſpiracy, multitudes of Catholics were enrolled, but they came not as Catholics, but as forming the great maſs of the lower orders of the people, whom the leaders affected to make the firſt objects of their benevolence and care.

Among the multitudes of this deſcription, ſome, no doubt, there were, who, uniting the extremes of moral depravity and religious bigotry, appeared to perpetrate all the crimes that attended the progreſs of the rebellion, with a ſtrange deſire of exalting their Church, and propagating their Faith—But is the caſe of thoſe *comparatively few individuals*, to be extended to, and comprehend *the whole body of the Catholics of Ireland?* And becauſe, while the

the kingdom was ſwarming with directories, with ſections, with committees of Catholic, Preſbyterian, and Proteſtant traitors, a few profligate Prieſts, (many of them too, degraded by their Church) contrived in a nook of the kingdom; to kindle the flame of religious fury, are you for this reaſon *to include in one general calumny, the whole Catholic body?* Or are you, *without foundation*, to impute to the Proteſtants of Ireland, the fabrication of the ſlander? Their Proteſtant brethren and fellow-citizens will never forget the perſevering loyalty of the Catholics of Munſter, nearly unſtained by a ſingle exception; nor the peaceful demeanor of Connaught, (almoſt univerſally Catholic) where, though a foreign ſtandard was diſplayed, affecting to eſpouſe their cauſe, a very inſignificant number *voluntarily* joined the invaders.

You ſeem to look forward with ſomething more than common malignity to the proſpects of future Catholic Emancipation, and you endeavour to lay the grounds of unceaſing diſcord, *proviſionally*, in caſe of that event. You take care to inform the Catholics, that their total emancipation ought not to be their *ultimatum*, for that a *neceſſary conſequence* of that emancipation would be *(d)* "*that the Proteſtant Church Eſtabliſhment would become a public wrong*"—and you farther moſt dangerouſly and inſidiouſly affirm, that they would have an indiſputable right "to have the frame of the Houſe of Commons reformed, and altered in their favor!!!

(*d*) Page 25.

Good God! how long will you ſuffer this ill-fated land to be the ſport and victim of wickedneſs and folly!

You propoſe *(e)* "to conſider what would be the natural effects of a favorable legiſlative Union."

1ſt. You ſay "the empire would have but one legiſlative—one organ of the public will, &c. &c." granted,—but *that will* would be *the will of Great Britain enforced*; and, *in every poſſible inſtance, ſecured by the proportion of* FIVE Britiſh to ONE Iriſh member.

2d. "Ireland would be in a *natural* ſituation"—I dare ſay ſhe would; but I admit I do not underſtand you, unleſs you mean to tell the Catholics that the Proteſtant religion is perfectly *natural to a united* kingdom, but *unnatural to one that is ſeparate*; and by that means to reconcile them to a Union, in hopes thereby to naturalize the Proteſtant church.

3d. "The Catholics would loſe the advantage of the argument of numbers, &c. &c." The whole of your work proves this to be a groſs fallacy. You firſt tell the Proteſtants that they have no right to the church eſtabliſhment, being inferior in number to the Catholics; and yet you ſay they may acquire a complete right by their own act, an act which they are at leaſt as little competent to, as they are to diſ-

(*e*) Page 26.

poſe

poſe of the church eſtabliſhment, namely—*to diſpoſe of the whole kingdom.*

4th. You ſtate, " that in the preſent ſituation of the two countries, Great Britain has no intereſt in ſupporting one ſect in Ireland more than another ;" and *(f)* " that you do not know by what tie ſhe is debarred from aſſiſting the Catholics." Indeed, Sir, I know of no ſuch tie neither ; for, *as yet*, thank God, *Great Britain has no more duties to perform in Ireland than the people of Jerſey ;* but if Great Britain were to take up the whim *of propagating the Popiſh religion in Ireland*, I preſume his Majeſty is not ſo unmindful of the *duties he owes* to his Proteſtant ſubjects here, or of the obligations *of his coronation oath*, as not to interfere, and *put a ſtop to the croiſade.*

You mention an objection that has been ſtated to your project, namely, " that it would increaſe abſentee proprietors ; and that as moſt abſentees are Proteſtants, Proteſtant influence would decreaſe."

Before I obſerve upon the notice which you have thought proper to take of this objection, give me leave to congratulate you on the *practical proficiency* you have made *in the modern philoſophy* ; where a ſubject of mixed concern, partly religious, and

(*f*) Page 27.

partly

partly political, comes before you, no French reformer ever ſhewed a more liberal contempt for every thing affecting religion. Of this I have ſhewn one inſtance already; another occurs here;—without thinking that part of the objection, that applies to religion, at all intitled to an anſwer, you proceed to that alone which has a political object; and here you do not attempt to diſpute the fact, but barely content yourſelf with ſaying, "that it does not appear that the abſentees from Scotland increaſed after the Union." However, notwithſtanding this notorious miſrepreſentation, you are on the whole modeſt enough on this ſubject, for even in a political view you ſeem inclined to give up the queſtion; and indeed in many places you admit in terms (*g*) "that abſentee proprietors would increaſe." But then you obſerve, that the ſolid advantages of a Union (and how well you have been able to point out thoſe advantages, I leave every reader to determine) would compenſate for the increaſe of abſentees. If the *evils of a Union are certain and inevitable*, and *the good no farther probable than you have been able to repreſent it*, I truſt we ſhall have the courage and the prudence to endure whatever may be inconvenient in our preſent ſituation, for ſome time longer, and endeavour to apply lenient and gradual remedies, inſtead of *running to every quack that offers his noſtrum;* and that we ſhall never ſtoop to the miſerable reſource of cowards, *voluntary ſuicide*, and *ſelf deſtruction*.

(*g*) Page 15.

You

You proceed to ſhew (*b*) "that a Union may be ſo ſhaped as to be favourable to the Proteſtants, without being unfavourable to the Catholics;"—as thus—

Firſt. "Free toleration will be ſecured to their religion (meaning the religion of the Catholics) their power of electing repreſentatives will be perpetuated, &c. &c." Have you no argument to convince *one deſcription of the people* of Ireland, that muſt not excite their animoſities or ſuſpicion *againſt ſome other?* But I truſt the Catholics will give no credit to the inſinuation here ſo broadly implied, that the toleration and elective power and civil capacities they now enjoy, *are not already effectually and irrevocably enſured to them.*

Secondly. You tell us "that it may be neceſſary to connect with a Union a proper ſupport for their clergy, and ſome regulation for their church, &c. &c." Why do you not offer ſome reaſon to ſhew that a proviſion for the Catholic clergy will be more neceſſary *after* a Union, than it *is at preſent?* I ſuſpect you mean nothing more nor leſs than to promiſe the Catholics a bribe—and I aſſure all thoſe that feel inclined to believe you, that you have no idea of keeping your word with them.

Thirdly. "Proteſtant and Catholic intereſt in county elections, and pariſh jealouſies will ceaſe, &c.

(*b*) Page 29.

&c."

&c." I wiſh you had given us any good reaſon to ſuppoſe, that the election of a member to ſerve in Britain will not be as warmly diſputed as that of a member to our own preſent parliament.

Fourthly. " If the Proteſtant intereſt be ſecure, there will be an end of ſtate partiality towards Proteſtants." This is an admirable way of *ſecuring intereſt*, namely, by a *deprivation of ſtate partiality*.

Fifthly. " Catholics will feel more confident under a legiſlature, where the majority of members will not be influenced againſt them by local prejudices and antipathies." I entreat my Catholic countrymen to cultivate in their minds a principle of conciliation, forgiveneſs, and amity towards their Proteſtant neighbours, and to *ſuſpect the views of every man to be diſhoneſt*, who attempts to perſuade them that the Proteſtant members of the Iriſh parliament *are influenced againſt them by local prejudices and antipathies*.

Sixthly. (*i*) " Sectarian ſtruggle will terminate ! ! !" Let us look a few lines further !

Seventhly. " An opening may be left in any plan of Union for the future admiſſion of Catholics to additional privileges, and Proteſtants can never object to ſuch an opening, as they may reſt aſſured,

(*i*) Page 30.

that

that the Britiſh Proteſtant parliament will not imprudently admit Catholic pretenſions, as the teſt-laws could not be partially repealed—and it is evident, that the Catholics could not force their claims with hoſtility againſt the whole power of Great Britain and Ireland!!!"—I have read your own words ſeveral times over, and find, with increaſing aſtoniſhment, at every peruſal, that they are literally as I have ſtated them. I believe to *leave an opening* to a ſect *for future admiſſion*, but at the ſame time to *block up* that opening with *unrepealable teſt-laws*, and with *maſſes of power*, is in politics an exact parallel to that grand mechanical *deſideratum*, a perpetual motion—and is preciſely the way not only *to ſet* SECTARIAN STRUGGLE *at work, but to provide for its unceaſing continuance*; and ſo far, I am alſo bound to believe, that the author of thoſe two propoſitions is either blind to the moſt obvious deductions from principles and facts himſelf, or that he feels as if he addreſſed a nation of drivellers, and treats them accordingly. But I cannot diſmiſs this part of the ſubject without ſome comment on the *unprincipled deceit* which appears here, united with ſo much *intellectual weakneſs*. It will be no excuſe to ſay, that the obvious and glaring folly prevents the miſchief, by betraying, at the firſt bluſh, the baſe and uncandid impoſition intended to be practiſed—neither is it worth enquiring which ſect you intend to deceive and miſlead—but I affirm, that in the beginning of the laſt quoted paragraph, you propoſe to *give hopes and expectations to the Catholics*,

 which

which in the remainder of it you aſſure the Proteſtants *ſhall never be realiſed.*

Eighthly. " The Catholics are more numerous in the South and Weſt of Ireland; and it is conceived, that thoſe parts of the kingdom would be moſt benefited by an Union, as to agriculture and commercial advantages." No miſerable ſophiſt ever advanced a more palpable *petitio principii* than this; but you have refuted your own aſſertion, for you endeavour to ſhew, a few pages further on, " *that in point of agriculture and the commerce depending upon it, the parts adjacent to Dublin will be moſt benefited* ; you there ſtate, " (*k*) that Dublin will probably *monopolize the corn trade* between Great Britain and Ireland; that its *commerce for all Engliſh goods with Liverpool will greatly encreaſe*, and *that in proportion as canals from Dublin are carried to different parts of the kingdom*, (and by the bye Connaught is the moſt direct and immediate object of thoſe canals) *it will be the* DEPÔT *for their conſumption in all articles of Britiſh manufactures and imports* ;" ſo that without *any* ſhare of the corn trade with England, and receiving *all articles of Britiſh manufactures and imports through Dublin*, ſtill Munſter and Connaught are to be *more benefited in agriculture and commerce* than any other parts of Ireland.

Ninthly. You ſtill follow your favourite ſyſtem, and aſſuming, without proof or argument, that a

(*k*) Page 39.

Union

Union will insure the Catholics many political, and all civil advantages, you dismiss them with a short advice, to "*(m)* become satisfied with their situation."—I most heartily join in the same advice; with this difference, that the sentiment which you *recommend to them to feel in the event of a Union*, I do most earnestly exhort them *to cultivate in the present situation of the country.*

You have shewn as little knowledge of common arithmetic as of political reasoning or history. Having repeatedly mentioned the Protestants of the established church, as *one-fourth* part of the population of Ireland, you afterwards state the Dissenters as a ratio of about *one-seventh* to the whole kingdom, and of *one-sixth* to the Catholics. For God's sake, in this last calculation, where have you left room for the one-fourth which you allow the Protestants?—Perhaps the solution may be found in the science of algebra or logarithms—it certainly does not belong to *common arithmetic*; but it would be to no purpose to discover your meaning; the calculation seems to have been introduced merely to enliven the subject with a *numerical conundrum*, for you draw from it no conclusion; *your assertion, that their importance would rise in the empire in consequence of a Union, would be equally unfounded, whether their comparative members were great or small.*

You appear to have introduced this sect, merely to afford you an opportunity "*(n) of charging them with views and conduct hostile to the establish-*

(m) Page 31. *(n)* Page 32.

 ment."

ment." Thus, following up your plan of embroiling all denominations of Iriſhmen in irreconcilable enmities, as a means of *driving them* not *from motives of reaſon* and *ſound policy*, but with a view to *their ſeparate intereſts* and the *depreſſion of other ſects*, into your favourite meaſure; but give me leave to aſſure my countrymen, that if England ſhall find herſelf ſucceſsful in procuring an object, (which appears to be ſo dear to her) at the expence of the mutual concord of the different ſects in Ireland, ſhe will always find it her intereſt to keep alive thoſe rancours, with a view to perpetuate her enjoyment of that object; well knowing that empire is only to be preſerved by thoſe means by which it has been acquired—and that if ſhe ſhall atchieve a Union by the diſcords of Iriſhmen, ſhe ſhould inevitably ſuffer a ſeparation as ſoon as Iriſhmen ſhould be reconciled.

You promiſe the Catholics and Preſbyterians, (*o*) "that if they will conſent to a Union, a modus for tithes will accompany the meaſure, and that both ſects ſhall be eſſentially relieved and benefited by that part of a new ſyſtem." As you intend to *relieve* the Catholics and Diſſenters *from the payment of tithes*, I am ſorry you have pledged yourſelf to the ſpiritual peers, that they ſhall have (*p*) "ſecurity for their dioceſan eſtates," becauſe I think if the *working clergy* are to be ſtript of their proviſion, there is no fund out of which ſome *little*

(*o*) Page 32. (*p*) Page 33.

pittance

pittance might be ſo equitably afforded them as the eſtates of the biſhops; and particularly as thoſe perſons, being no longer lords of parliament, will not require ſo large an income to ſupport their dignity.—By the bye, after having propoſed to give away the tithes, I wiſh you had explained what you mean by the words "ſecurity to the general intereſt and eſtabliſhment of the church" in the very next page.—You have a ſtrange notion of Preſbyterian obſtinacy; (*q*) "when the *ſtumbling block of tithes is removed*, they may probably fall in with the Proteſtant church," by which I ſuppoſe you mean that as ſoon as he ceaſes to *pay* for the prayers of the Eſtabliſhed Church, *a Preſbyterian will ſee their value.*

I give no anſwer to your (*r*) paragraph reſpecting the peers; *firſt*, becauſe it amounts only to a begging of a queſtion throughout—contains nothing applicable to the ſubject,—and appears to be only introduced in compliment to the dignity of the perſons to whom it relates,—and, with a view to make a parade of taking up the whole ſubject in due order—But *ſeccondly* and *principally*, becauſe I rather ſuppoſe that the *real argument*, by which you *hope to perſuade* theſe exalted perſonages, is to be found in a different part of your work, namely, under the head of "*private intereſts to be managed and compenſated.*"

You ſay, "The ſame reaſoning (I confeſs I ſee nothing like reaſoning) will apply

(*q*) Page 32. (*r*) Page 33.

to

to the Houſe of Commons, and you aſk can it be doubted "that a reaſonable repreſentation may be ſelected."—Whether a reaſonable repreſentation may be ſelected or not, it ſeems is not the queſtion, for you have already fixed the proportion at five Britiſh to one Iriſh member, and therefore, the queſtion you have given us to conſider is whether *five* to *one*, be not a reaſonable proportion.—For my part, in a caſe where the intereſts or feelings of England and Ireland may appear to croſs each other, I would as readily conſent to have *no* member for Ireland as *one* againſt *five*; and to know the *worſt* that could befall us in that caſe, we have only to *look as far back as before the year* 1780, when the *Britiſh parliament conceived it to be neceſſary for the benefit of the empire*, to ſhut up the harbours of Ireland by the Navigation and other Acts, and generally to reſtrict, or (as they called it) to regulate the trade of this country.

To your obſervations reſpecting the Bar, I ſhall perhaps ſay leſs than the importance of that body, and the figure they make in your work, would appear to intitle them to. Much of what you have ſaid ſtands refuted in the face of the public by well known and undiſputed facts. To ſome of your opinions, I in a great degree ſubſcribe my aſſent. Certainly with the views you entertain, and the knowledge you muſt have acquired of the ſtate of Ireland, by your long reſidence among us, there was ſome addreſs and cunning in your attempt to deprive the Bar of Ireland, of that confidence

confidence which the nation has hitherto placed in them as a body;—their honour and integrity as individuals, their learning and abilities as a profeſſion, their repeated and meritorious exertions in behalf of their country, have impreſſed upon the public mind a ſerious reliance on their opinion, in all matters of high and momentous concern. To no ſet of men was the nation more indebted for the benefits attending the volunteer aſſociations, and they may be called the very ſpring and life of the yeomanry inſtitutions. You know their wiſdom too well *not to anticipate what would be their teſtimony*, and it was deſirable, if poſſible, *to undermine their credit.*

I admit that ſome men of no pretenſions, ſave from their fortunes and connections, do, without learning or capacity, obtrude themſelves into that profeſſion; hoping, by borough intereſt and family intrigue, to raiſe themſelves to honours which they do not deſerve; that others, vainly arrogating to themſelves the character of politicians and orators, avail themſelves of the forms of our repreſentation to acquire ſeats in Parliament, with a view to force themſelves into office—But beſides, that the caſe is preciſely ſimilar in England, the nation ſuffers no injury from that circumſtance—in the ſubordinate offices of the Bar, and ſometimes in other departments of the State, thoſe gentlemen may "earn a humiliating reward;" but a ſingle inſtance has not occurred ſince Ireland acquired her independence, of a lawyer being promoted to the Bench merely

merely by parliamentary intereſt, or from an empty talent for political declamation.—Before that fortunate and glorious æra, indeed, political cabal was the *only road* by which the judgment ſeat was acceſſible, (and, no doubt, the caſe will be as formerly if we return to our old ſituation)—But at this moment, there is not a ſingle Judge upon the Bench, who did not acquire his ſituation by well and long tried ability at the Bar; and when you tell the people of Ireland, that *after the Union they ſhall have able Judges*, I ſuppoſe you mean that they ſhall be favoured *with Judges from England*, who, as Engliſhmen, no doubt, muſt be ſuperior to every thing Iriſh; for *abler men*, in every true ſenſe of the word, *than we now have in thoſe ſituations*, or men who more ſedulouſly attended to the duties of their profeſſion while at the Bar, I am ſure do not exiſt in the profeſſion either here or in England—To their integrity, the unanimous voice of their country bears witneſs—and you yourſelf hardly ſeem to diſpute it.

The Bar, you ſay, (*s*) "*may be injured* (though not materially) by the arrangement"—and from thence, you take occaſion to anticipate a few words of praiſe in favour of that diſintereſted virtue that is to induce the placemen and expectants of the Bar to vote for this meaſure in the Houſe of Commons, and to ſupport it abroad; but for my part, Sir, I ſhall more readily rely upon the (*t*) "virtuous ardency of youth" than on the wiſdom of age and experience, when *that age* has been ſpent, and *that experience* acquired, in the midſt of (*u*) "*political*

(*s*) Page 36. (*t*) Ibidem. (*u*) Ibidem.

temptations"

temptations" in aſcertaining the *modes* and the *proportions* in which " private intereſts may be *managed and compenſated*" *for public wrong*—and how far *the general evils of a country may conduce to the individual benefit of their authors.*

I cannot conceive a more accurate barometer to aſcertain the ſtate of the political atmoſphere, than the profeſſion of the law; their proſperity muſt be in proportion to the proſperity of the public, and their fortune muſt riſe and fall with the wealth of the nation—converſant as they are in the arrangement, ſecurity, and defence of the property of individuals, and above all, of that property which ariſes from commerce, manufactures, and agriculture, the *extent* of that property *muſt fix the limits* of forenſic emolument.—If, then, the Bar be, as you inſinuate, compoſed of *ſelfiſh perſons*, ſtudiouſly *regarding* only *their own intereſt*; if they are at *leaſt as wiſe as the ordinary claſſes of mankind*, (which I conceive will not be denied) if it be as you ſay, even *too much their habit to cultivate political enquiry*; and if the *advantages of the profeſſion be commenſurate to the national welfare*—can a ſtronger argument be offered to a public meaſure, than their voice and opinion againſt it?

(*x*) " To demonſtrate (I ſuppoſe you mean to endeavour to demonſtrate) to the Clergy the advantages of a Union, would be loſt labour indeed."—

(*x*) Page 37.

I entirely agree with you—the kind and affectionate intercourſe they might hope to enjoy with their Catholic and Preſbyterian neighbours, after thoſe ſects ſhould be *relieved* by the part of your new ſyſtem relating to tithes, which I have already mentioned, could not fail to operate as a full compenſation to them for any *worldly loſs* they might ſuſtain by the arrangement.

I admire the caution you ſuggeſt to the gentlemen of landed property, to diſregard the opinions and arguments of "enterpriſing adventurers."—Pray, Sir, are *you* totally devoid of political enterpriſe? Is your fortune, whatever it may be, the *gift* of your anceſtors, or the *fruit* ofyour own toil in *trade*, or *in a profeſſion?* Have you never *adventured in the field of politics?* Did you never engage in the *conteſts and ſtruggles of party?* And ſince this character of an enterpriſing, politician, and party adventurer, be ſo contemptible and dangerous, for heaven's ſake inform us *how* and *where* you have looked for the "harveſt of your hopes." You tell the country gentlemen, "that *if* a Union would *put an end to diſcords and inſurrections*, it would benefit their eſtates, &c. &c."; but *if* by *threats* of impending force and irreſiſtible power—by *fallacious argument*—by *groſs miſrepreſentations*—by exciting and fomenting *party feuds* and *religious acrimony*—by holding out *contradictory and incompatible hopes and expectations* to all deſcriptions of perſons—by ſeizing the moment*of public calamity* and of *univerſal terror*—and finally, by *managing* and *compenſating private intereſts*, you

you are able to accompliſh a meaſure which every *unbought Iriſhman* will *feel it his intereſt to recall and do away*—and if this laſt can only be done *by a more dreadful and unanimous inſurrection than ever occurred here before*, what becomes of your propoſition in favor of the landed gentlemen, and the increaſed value of their eſtates? I confeſs there is as yet only *my* hypotheſis againſt *yours*; but, when we look over the world to every parallel inſtance that can be found in hiſtory; when we contemplate the preſent diſcontents in Norway, only ſuppreſſed by the powerful army of Denmark, and the inſignificance of the country which has prevented it from becoming an object of interference with other nations—the revolt of Sweden from the ſame power—of the Netherlands and Portugal from Spain—of Corſica from Genoa—of Brabant and Flanders, lately from the Emperor—of America, from the King of Great Britain—of Ireland, from England as a nation—and, in ſhort, to every caſe in which an *unnatural* and *inequitable* Union of the *powerful* with the *weak*, has been formed, without check or protecting principle, —where, "ſtate partially," was uniformly and of neceſſity in favor of the former; and when political injury was on all occaſions accompanied with perſonal indignity and inſult to the latter;—when we ſee the avidity with which *one* ſtate has always embraced every opportunity of diſmembering *another*—how England aſſiſted the Low Countries, and France the American provinces—when all this is conſidered, and the oppoſite ſuppoſitions which you and I have hazarded, come to be examined by this

touchſtone of experience and common ſenſe—whatever may be the public opinion of *your* enterpriſe and adventure—however *your* boldneſs in political conteſts and party ſtruggles may be admitted, to *me* at leaſt will belong the humble merit of *a faithful chronicler of paſt tranſactions*, and I hope *of no unprofitable forewarner of events to come.*

You affirm *(y)* "that a Union will place the Iriſh merchant upon an equality with the Britiſh, and he will be certain to enjoy for ever, &c. &c." Pray, Sir, was it with a view to the *general benefit* of the empire or to *the ſeparate intereſts of Great Britain*, that till within thoſe eighteen years paſt the Britiſh parliament *reſtrained and ruined the commerce of Ireland?* If the true object were the intereſt of Britain, and the pretext only the benefit of the empire, will not the *ſame pretext* for ever cover and juſtify the *ſame object*, whenever ſimilar power ſhall exiſt? Or have you given us, *even your own aſſertion*, that England is now *more juſt* and *more diſintereſted* than ſhe was before; and that ſhe will *now* make a *good uſe* of the *ſame power* of which ſhe *made a bad uſe then*? Or, perhaps, you are of opinion that there was *nothing inequitable in the oppreſſion of Ireland*, when the *aggrandiſing of your own country* was to be the conſequence. But if it ever *has* been, or ever *may* be poſſible, that the intereſts of the empire ſhall require a ſacrifice from Ireland, let her retain the power to *judge of the neceſſity* in her own hands, and not leave it to the deciſion of a nation that is to *gain* whatever ſhe is to *loſe*.—At

(y) Page 39.

the

the ſecurity of *one* member to *five*, I could laugh! But that the ſubject compels me to be grave!

In your anſwer to that objection againſt a Union, which ariſes from the conſequent *(z)* ruin of the metropolis, as you refer us to the example of Edinburgh, I take this opportunity of ſhortly applying myſelf to the general argument of analogy between Scotland and Ireland.——That the Union did not ſecure tranquillity to North Britain I have already ſhewn; on the contrary, in the firſt thirty years ſhe was diſturbed by *two* dreadful and wide-ſpread rebellions, of *both* of which *probably*, but *certainly of the firſt*, the Union was one ſtrongly operating cauſe. But we are told again "that Scotland has found the benefit of a Union in increaſed commerce, wealth and population." That her commerce, her wealth, and her population, have increaſed ſince the Union, I will allow; but I will maintain that there *is evidence*, and evidence which thoſe who argue from analogy muſt admit to be *concluſive* and *convincing*, to prove not only that ſhe *did not acquire that increaſe* by means of the Union, but, that on the contrary, *the Union was injurious to her*, *and prevented* her *greater* and *farther improvement* in every one of thoſe particulars.

In the ſame period of time *Ireland has increaſed* in wealth, population, and commerce, in a *ratio*, (I ſpeak within very ſtrict bounds) of at *leaſt two to one*

(z) Page 39.

more

more than Scotland, although for ſixty years of that period Ireland was *cruelly oppreſſed by the Britiſh parliament*; and, although Scotland during that whole time, enjoyed her proportion, as a part of Great Britain, of Iriſh plunder—and had alſo the advantage of her ſhare in the Eaſt India trade, from which Ireland has been wholly excluded; ſo that *the whole force* of the analogy *is againſt a Union*, tending to ſhew, *not that Ireland will be a gainer*, becauſe Scotland has benefited by it, but that Ireland ought to reject it, *becauſe it has injured Scotland*—ſimilar views of the comparative ſtates of Dublin and Edinburgh at the time of the Union, and at the preſent time would warrant (but in a greater degree) a ſimilar concluſion.

But let us examine the remaining part of your argument in anſwer to this objection. You tell us not to dread the deſertion of the capital, the bankruptcy of its ſhopkeepers, or the ruin of its proprietors; becauſe, "that Dublin muſt ſtill be the reſidence of a viceroy and his court—*that ſciences, arts, and amuſements may be cultivated in proportion as there will be leſs attention to politics*; that it will be the ſeat of juſtice, the chief ſeat of revenue, and the head-quarters of the army. It will monopolize the corn trade between Great Britain and Ireland with (I do not know what) advantages from canals, &c. &c." Perhaps no ſubject of equal conſequence was ever treated with more *ſang-froid* than you have handled this.—The diſparagement and ruin of eſtates—the dilapidation of whole ſtreets and

and ſquares of almoſt palatial magnificence—the diſappointment of many a well-founded ſpeculation, encouraged by the view of unexampled proſperity around, and a protecting government, and promiſing large and well-merited fortunes to the undertakers—the overthrow of every trade that miniſtered to the calls of taſte, of faſhion, or of wealth —the ruin of the retailer, and the total deſtruction of a hoſt of artizans in almoſt every department of labour and ingenuity ; all thoſe heart-rending reflections are to be ſilenced *by a quaint unmeaning illuſory repartee.*—Why, what have you to fear ? Surely as you have *now* no concern with politics, *as we have ſent every man connected with the politics of the country to England*, what have you to do but to cultivate the ſciences, arts, and amuſements ! ! ! I wiſh, Sir, when you ſpeak of *private intereſts to be compenſated*, you would think of ſome compenſation for thoſe innocent individuals, who are to be the wanton victims of your barbarous and unfeeling policy ;— when thoſe whom numerous and opulent cuſtomers, whom the annual and periodical reſort of temporary reſidents, and whom a uniformly certain and profitable trade have enabled to pay *rents of unexampled magnitude*, ſhall ſee their ſhops and apartments deſerted, and their ſlowly lingering ſtock at length ſeized to ſatisfy their landlord—*have you provided compenſation for them ?*

Have you provided compenſation for him who has bound himſelf to pay rents for large tracts of ground

by

by the foot, which he muſt now let *by the acre*, and who has laid out his whole fortune in *buildings that never muſt be finiſhed?* Do you think *no compenſation due to him*, who has devoted his life to the rational gratifications of a ſplendid and generous nobility, to the ornament of a great and proud metropolis, to the eaſe, accommodation, taſte, and comfort of an opulent gentry, and a princely body of merchants; and who, when thoſe *merchants ſhall be reduced*, that *gentry impoveriſhed*, the *metropolis humbled*, and his *noble employers expatriated*, will have no reſource but the charity of his *equally diſtreſſed fellow-citizens?*

The remainder of your anſwer to this objection is equally abſurd and inſulting—" that Dublin ſhall ſtill be the reſidence of the Lord Lieutenant, the ſeat of juſtice, and of the revenue, and the head-quarters of the army." Thus, when Dublin complains that you are going to injure her by carrying away her parliament, with all its members, and their connections, you obſerve, that ſhe can ſuſtain no injury by that, as you will leave her the Caſtle, the Four Courts, the Cuſtom-houſe, and Barracks; as if it was a ſufficient excuſe to the capital for depriving her of *moſt* of her advantages, *that you did not mean to rob her of all.* As to the benefit of the corn trade, and the other advantages you promiſe her from the canals both in England and Ireland, how are thoſe matters connected with a Union? Is the Union neceſſary as a means of procuring to Dublin the corn trade with England? And cannot the canals in

England

England and Ireland be brought to perfection without it?—I presume your whole argument may be brought to this plain statement—your *present advantages are so many*, and your *future prospects so promising*, that you may very well afford to *give up a great share of both*, in order *to indulge the minister*, and to *aggrandise the kingdom of Great Britain!*

You are pleased to affirm, (*a*) "that the adversaries of a Union admit that it will be beneficial to trade and manufactures." Those courtly disputants, who differ in opinion in order to compliment a great statesman, by being convinced after a little gentle argument, may possibly have made some such admission; but I deny that men of common sense can entertain such an opinion, or that any man to whom the welfare of Ireland is dear, ever made the concession.—I would stake the whole question on this short issue—*If you can point out a single regulation by which the trade and manufactures of Ireland can be benefited, that may not as easily and as effectually be adopted in our present situation as after a Union*, I will withdraw my weak opposition—But if England shall hold out *tempting baits* of commercial indulgence as *the price of a Union*—though they appear to *promise* Ireland the riches of the Indies, *I would reject the bargain*; because *it cannot be*, nor is it consistent with human nature, that any nation would *pay a high price as the purchase of power*, without after-

(*a*) Page 41.

wards making that power *an inſtrument to reimburſe and indemnify* herſelf.—Beſides, we all know that Great Britain will in *no* caſe make conceſſions *in favour of Ireland*, and *to her own prejudice*—and if there be any commercial advantage which Great Britain *can extend to Ireland without injury to herſelf*, and has hitherto *withheld it*, or *ſhall continue to withhold* it, till Ireland ſhall *ſubmit* to a Union; ſuch a diſpoſition manifeſted on the part of England, ought *to convince Ireland that ſhe never can be ſafe under the power of that country.*

This laſt obſervation applies to the argument which you addreſs to Cork (*b*)—If Cork be an improper ſituation for a marine ſtation and a dock-yard, it has been wiſe in the Britiſh miniſter to withhold what would be a dangerous indulgence to that city, and the adoption or rejection of a Union can never make any alteration as to the propriety or impropriety of eſtabliſhing a naval arſenal there. But if the "preſent dock-yards of England be inadequate to the extent of the navy, and that a new ſtation be wanted," and if Cork be the beſt ſituation to be found in thoſe dominions for ſuch an eſtabliſhment, it then ought to be immediately ſelected whether a Union ſhall take place or not; and if the miniſter of England attempts making it *a part of a bargain* for a Union, it ought to be a further inducement to this country to *put herſelf on her guard*—becauſe, (not to mention the unfriendly diſ-

(*b*) *Ibid.*

poſition

poſition it would imply towards Ireland) it would evince ſuch a mean, peddling, and jobbing policy as would leave good grounds to ſuſpect the integrity of the whole propoſal;—beſides, if Cork is to have a *ſpecific bribe*, why ought not *ſome indemnity* to be given to *Dublin*, which you admit will be *ſo much more injured.*

As to the mode in which you propoſe to (*c*) "obviate the common and general objections to a Union," it is perfectly conſiſtent with the whole of your plan; for it is a maſs of miſrepreſentation, of unfounded aſſertion, and of deluſive argument; you even miſrepreſent the objections themſelves!—Your play upon the word extinguiſh, in your firſt objection, is puerile and ridiculous; if any man ever complained that *Ireland would be extinguiſhed* by a Union, he meant that her *rank among nations*, her *pride*, her *dignity*, her *independence*, and *her wealth*, would be deſtroyed. In your anſwer to the ſecond objection, you barely recapitulate your former aſſertions, mingled with a little of the geography of other countries, to ſhew that Dublin is not more remote from London than other towns from the capitals on which they depend—as if it was not the loſs of her parliament, that Ireland would have to lament, but the fatigue the members might endure from the journey.—The third objection you ſtate to be, "ſhall we tamely reſign that legiſlation whoſe independence was ſo glo-

(*c*) Page 42.

 rioufly

riouſly aſſerted and eſtabliſhed by the arms of the volunteers," and then, as if it was only by way of compliment to the volunteers that Ireland was to wiſh for a continuance of her liberty, you proceed to argue, that *although the volunteers* (*d*) " *meant well*," by aſſerting the independence of their country, yet that in fact they " *miſtook the buſineſs entirely*," and that in your opinion it would have been *better for Ireland to have remained in her former ſituation of ſervile dependence.*—Why, Sir, even in that ſtate of ſervile dependence, ſhe yet rejected a Union, and ſhe did ſo, not merely becauſe ſhe felt that it would for ever prevent her riſing in wealth and proſperity, but becauſe ſhe well knew, from every principle of political reaſoning, and from every inſtance of political analogy, *that it would for ever rivet her chains.*

You ſtate as a fourth objection, (*e*) Muſt it not be the height of folly to part with the management of our own concerns for ever? To this you ſay the anſwer is obvious, namely, that we ſhall retain the management of our concerns *as far as is neceſſary!* —I wiſh you had honoured us with your opinion on this abſtract queſtion—*How far it may be neceſſary for a nation to retain the management of its own concerns.* How would ſuch a propoſition be received at Weſtminſter or at Whitehall—That there were or *might be national concerns of which it was not neceſſary for the nation to retain the management!!!*

(*d*) Page 44. (*e*) Page 45.

You

You are obliged as a further anſwer to this objection, to go again into the proportion of power to be given to Ireland in England.—Indeed, Sir, if the Iriſh Members in the Britiſh Parliament, or the Britiſh Cabinet, could be relied upon—if we had any ſecurity to expect that they would but feel *one half of that love and preference for their country* which an Engliſhman never loſes in Ireland, *let the rewards of his ſervices here be never ſo unbounded*—if that preference for his own country *were fortified with ſuch a contempt for England* as you and many of your country *profeſs and feel for us*—perhaps with *equal numbers* Ireland might have a fair chance of *equal meaſures* in executive and legiſlative diſpenſations—But as paſt experience affords no ſuch proſpect—as the *wealth* and *power* of Great Britain, her abundant *ſources of pleaſure and amuſement*, her *civilization*, her *commerce*, her *manufactures*, her *morals*, her *manners*, her *eſtabliſhment*, and her *conſtitution*, are, as you ſtate, ſo tranſcendantly ſuperior to every thing that belongs to Ireland ; and as it has been *ſo much the faſhion* for our nobility and gentry *to affect to be conſidered* (in inclination at leaſt) *as Engliſhmen*—and as England will always be able to hold out to them ſuch ſubſtantial temptations to *act as if they were Engliſhmen*—I confeſs, even with equal numbers in the Cabinet and the Parliament, *I ſhould utterly deſpair for my country*—But when we know that the arrangement of the Cabinet cannot be ſubject to regulations by act of Parliament without overturning the Conſtitution ; that if there could be a law for ſuch a purpoſe, no Iriſhman would ever

ever be introduced there who had not firſt *done away the original ſin of Iriſh birth* by a full and practical recantation *of every principle of attachment to Ireland.* When we are told that we ſhall have a proportion of only *one* to *five* in the Parliament of the United Kingdom; and above all when we conſider, *that the meaſure can never be accompliſhed but at the price of a ſpecific bribe, or as you call* it, *compenſation* for every vote that ſhall be given to ſupport it—and that the meaſure which is to *leave no hope* for Ireland, but in the ſteady incorruptible (I had almoſt ſaid) romantic patriotiſm of her repreſentatives, is to carry with it a practical demonſtration *that we have no integrity or virtue* among us—When all theſe matters are conſidered, I will aſk in your own words—*Whether it can be leſs than the height of folly to part with the management of our own concerns for ever?*

To the fifth ſuppoſed objection *(f)* "that a kingdom which ſubjects itſelf to the will of another, becomes its ſlave"—you are obliged to give an anſwer founded on the following unmeaning aſſertion: "that while any part of the Union remains free, the whole muſt be free"—And you aſk, "who would deſire to have better ſecurity for his liberty than an Engliſhman poſſeſſes? And how will the liberties of either country be endangered, when a common body of repreſentatives ſhall be formed, &c. &c."—To your firſt poſition, that freedom in one part of the empire will ſecure the freedom of the reſt, I offer as an anſwer and contradiction, the ſituation of

(f) Page 46.

England

England and all her dependencies, until America ſeparated, and Ireland threw off the yoke—During that time, England was as free as ſhe is now, and yet Ireland and America were in a ſtate of ſlavery.—You will ſay, neither America nor Ireland had repreſentatives in the Britiſh Parliament—to which I reply, that the *ſmall* proportion of *one* repreſentative to *five* cannot *ſecure* either the actual or theoretical liberty of Ireland, for that our repreſentatives will, at beſt, be no more than ſo many agents and advocates for their country, and not a true repreſentation of the people, poſſeſſing an inſurmountable *veto* in all queſtions affecting the intereſts of Ireland; but on the contrary, a meaſure of the United Parliament directly acting upon Ireland, might be carried by a majority of five to one with *every Iriſh member's voice againſt it*.—Has England then no better ſecurity for her freedom than Ireland will have, or has Ireland at preſent any ſecurity for her freedom whatſoever, when ſhe ſhall be told that ſhe is ſo far in the power of Parliament, that that Parliament can annihilate its own voice, and put her in a ſituation to be governed, *not by a majority of her own repreſentatives*, but by an aſſembly, *in which even their unanimous voice would appear but a trifling inſignificant minority*—And I aſk you, Sir, does not England now enjoy this proud ſuperiority over Ireland, that if any man were to preſume to hold out ſuch doctrines of the omnipotence of the Parliament, and make ſimilar propoſals reſpecting England, accompanied with alluſions to *force*, and military and naval ſuperiority, as you have done with regard to Ireland, he would by the Houſe of Commons of Great Britain, be

be voted an enemy to his country, and profecuted accordingly—And as for the liberties of Ireland after a Union, they may be *endangered*, nay, *completely overthrown*, whenever the repreſentatives of the People of Great Britain ſhall think *ſuch a meaſure would conduce to the general intereſts of the empire*—a ſentiment not *new* in England.

But you attempt to ſhew the preſent times, (*g*) "when the people are in a ſtate of irritation and turbulence, and the kingdom engaged in a war," a proper one to agitate the queſtion. The argument with which you ſupport this poſition, is one which is calculated for ever to embroil thoſe two countries in ſomething more than ordinary contentions. You ſtate, that becauſe the volunteers, whom you are pleaſed in common with the late rebels to ſtile, (*h*) "enemies of their country," took advantage of the embarraſſment of Great Britain in the laſt war, to aſſert the independence of their country, therefore *we* (here for the firſt time you have avowed yourſelf an Engliſhman) ſhould turn againſt them their own game, and make uſe of a time of war to *eſtabliſh the ſecurity of the empire*; thus, according to the old doctrine, arguing *againſt the independence* of Ireland, as *injurious to the general intereſts* of the empire.

But for the peace of that empire, I deprecate all ſuch dangerous topics.—If the conſideration that

(*g*) Page 47. (*h*) Page 48.

Ireland

Ireland acquired her independence by taking advantage of the embarraſſment of England, *be a warrant for England now to avail herſelf of the contentions in Ireland*, to rob her again of that acquiſition;—when are we to look for an end of the conteſt? Inſtead of living together in terms of amity and kindneſs, thoſe two countries will be ever on the watch, *each to avail itſelf of the diſtreſs of the other*—England with a *view to power*—Ireland in *purſuit of freedom*; and of courſe they will contract a mutual deſire to involve one another in eternal misfortunes.—But of a ſyſtem ſo diſcordant, there muſt ſhortly be an end; for ſurely, no laws can be framed ſufficiently coheſive to hold two countries together, between whom ſo much avowed hoſtility, and ſuch incorrigible principles of repulſion, are found to exiſt.—The narrow limits of a haſty work like this, will not allow me to wander from the ſubject, or I ſhould here with little difficulty reſcue the volunteers from your malice; I truſt, however, to the gratitude of their country, that it is unneceſſary.

You feel that you are under a neceſſity of endeavouring to prove, *(i)* "that a Union is within the power and competence of parliament."—I will on that ſubject concede to you thus much—and perhaps with the views you ſeem to entertain, you will deſire no more; an army *might dictate*—a parliament *might vote* ſuch a law—ſo far is phyſically

(i) Ibid.

poſſible—but *no vote of Parliament*—no *military Power* could ever deprive the People, *ſo betrayed and conquered*, of their right to *repel* that power, and *repeal* that law, *(k) by every means that God and nature might put into their hands.*

You ſeem diſſatisfied, as you advance towards a concluſion, with the mode in which you before boaſted of having "obviated the arguments that might be drawn from national dignity and national pride," and you feel it neceſſary again to return to the charge; and, indeed, I believe we are on this ſubject indebted to you for the only ſincere, candid, and plain-dealing paragraph in the whole work.—With avowed and malevolent rancour you expreſs, *even in exclamations*, your *diſguſt at the independence of Ireland*, and you fairly open the views which England entertains in a Union, namely, that Ireland ſhall contribute her full proportion to the public expence of the Empire, and *(l)* "convert that protection, which ſhe "now receives as a favour, into a right." Thus then the whole is one of the Britiſh Miniſter's ſchemes of finance to relieve Great Britain, by ſharing her burdens with Ireland, and to extend to Ireland her proportion of four hundred millions of debt, and her quota of the propoſed tax on income.—As to the expence of the army now in Ireland, of which

(*k*) Parliamentary Debates in England on the American War. (*l*) Page 50.

you

you ſeem ſo feelingly to complain, I beg to aſk, was the grant of thoſe troops *wholly diſintereſted* on the part of Great Britain? Was it *merely as a favour* to Ireland that ſhe ſent them? Had ſhe *no fears* for her own ſafety and liberty, when the Loyaliſts in Ireland were in danger of being cruſhed by the rebellion, or the whole kingdom likely to be reduced by foreign invaſion? —You have here (as far as your weight will go) given credit to one of the moſt malignant, and, I candidly admit, moſt unfounded charges that has ever been advanced againſt the Government of theſe countries—namely, that for many years paſt they have been endeavouring to promote diſcontents and excite diſſenſions in Ireland, in hopes of occaſioning ſome critical convulſion, that ſhould afford them a pretext to get an army into the country, and enable them to dictate to Ireland ſuch terms, as might recover to Great Britain the power which ſhe formerly enjoyed.

You offer as an inducement to the Proteſtants of Ireland, to put this country for ever in the power of Great Britain—a ſtrange picture of the fluctuations of Britiſh councils!—*(m)* Of the Proteſtant Aſcendancy you ſay, "a party "in England term it by opprobrious names; "great leaders in oppoſition, poſſibly the future "miniſters of England, condemn it; and

(m) Page 52.

" ſome members of the Britiſh Parliament are " ſuppoſed to be adverſe to it." Its ſtability, you ſay, " may reſt upon accident, upon the " death of a *ſingle* character, upon the change " of a Miniſter, or the temper of a Lord Lieu- " tenant, and the policy of the ſyſtem is much " doubted in England."—Whatever may be the policy or juſtice of the ſyſtem of Proteſtant Aſcendancy, however the champions of either party may be deſirous of acquiring partizans, wherever they can be found, I think it would be but a prudent meaſure for them at leaſt to agree in this—not to look for auxiliaries in Great Britain, if no better dependance can be placed on the ſtability and ſincerity of the principles which operate there upon the ſubject, than what can be expected from your ſtatement.

I have followed you faithfully throughout your whole work, with, I confeſs, no ſmall degree of confidence in the anſwer I have given to it in all its points—a confidence not founded on any ſenſe of my own capacity, but on a feeling that there was no difficulty in the talk.—In your oſtentatious diſplay of force and power—your rude and inſulting language towards Ireland—your ſtateſmanlike contempt of ſincerity and plain-dealing, ſteady and unvarying, except where your Britiſh partialities hurried you away—your endeavours, further to embroil the contending intereſts of the kingdom, and your flimſy efforts to blind the underſtandings

ſtandings of them all—in your miſtatements and miſrepreſentations—your puerile examples and disjointed analogies—your futile arguments and unfounded aſſertions—in your logical and political ſoleciſms—in your *management* and *compenſation*—and in the dangerous and ſuſpicious doctrine you openly avow throughout —I have found a hoſt of allies.—

Convinced as I am, that any Union would complete the ruin of Ireland—and that even if it were not ſeriouſly detrimental, that it is not neceſſary for her intereſts—perſuaded that the meaſure would ultimately involve this country in the *next greateſt calamity* that could befal it—*a total ſeparation from England*—I am yet deſirous to ſee your "promiſed ſcheme accom-"panied with calculations and details;"—not indeed expecting to find any thing in that ſcheme that would reconcile me to your project —but becauſe I entertain a firm conviction that,

"——As the toad, ugly and venomous,
"Wears yet a *precious jewel* in its head,"

it will, like your preſent Eſſay, carry with it more than its own refutation—

My object was merely to anſwer whatever you had advanced upon the ſubject, and not to enter into diſcuſſion beyond that limit—I fear I have been too diffuſe, and that to go through my tedious and unintereſting pages will conſume more of the public time than a name, unknown

unknown and unvalued, can entitle me to expect—and yet I cannot lay aside my pen without addressing to you a few words in your private capacity as a gentleman.—I am unacquainted with your person—your character I know to be respectable—your talents are certainly of magnitude—your honour and integrity, in concerns detached from politics, has never been impeached—I have been informed that your manners are polished, and that your disposition is amiable in the extreme.—This kingdom owes you obligations as an able and prudent Minister.—Even on the present occasion, I respect the motive which has brought you forward.—Suffer not, I beseech you, a sentiment of anger to enter your mind against me.—Our feelings are congenial—there is between us but a geographical difference—You are the bold champion for England—I am the humble advocate for Ireland.—I conclude nearly in the words of my distinguished countryman, when he addressed an English statesman on a parallel occasion, (may the issues be parallel!)—"*You are toiling to relieve and aggran-*
"*dise* YOUR *Country—I labour to preserve the li-*
"*berties of* MINE."

CHARLES BALL.

DUBLIN,
DEC. 8th, 1798.